

My name is Gertrude Gingerich,

I am 72 years old and my husband is 74 and confined to a wheel chair after his last stroke. We live alone though some of our children live close by. On December 19, 2001, My husband was away at the Senior Center. It was an unusually warm day and as I was eating my lunch there was a knock on the door. As I got up to answer a young man walked in. He asked me if I had any roof leaks. I said I do. He said he would go get some more materials and be right back. He wasn't long. He went up on my roof and was spraying some black tar stuff on my roof. This young man's name was Robert Branton. He also had two other men with him. One older man who claimed to be Robert Branton's father and another man. The father came in the house and was talking to me for some time. He told me he had high blood pressure and he talked about his son. He said his son had just married this year and that his son was a Reverend and that he teaches a Youth Group. He also said that his son was a good honest man and the he would do me right n this work and he would give me a good price. He then went back outside. When I looked out my window I seen them scrubbing my car. They had gotten tar all over my car. In about an hour and a half they were finished and Robert Branton brought me a bill. It had his name and cell phone number on it and a written five year warranty. The amount was \$4850.00 I said my goodness! I wrote him a check for the amount he wanted. He said he would be back the next day and put up a gutter for me over my back door.

Robert Branton did come back the next day along with his helper. They put up approximately a 16 foot piece of gutter and one downspout. He brought me another bill for \$750.00 which I paid by check. I saw that he just ran the downspout on my deck and I said I didn't want it like that. He said if I didn't like it to call him later and he would fix it like I wanted it.

A few days went by. My daughter-in-law asked me what those guys were doing on my roof and I told her I got my roof fixed. She didn't ask what it cost and I didn't tell her.

However I did tell my sister that I got my roof sprayed off and I told her what it had cost me. She then told her daughter (my niece) who had a fit. Her husband who is a contractor checked out the work that was done here. He said they had used driveway sealer and that it was not intended for using on asphalt shingles. He aid that I was intentionally misled by the materials they had used. My niece then asked me if I would mind if she would check into this and see what she could do about getting me my money back. I said no, I didn't mind.

I then didn't tell my husband or children or anyone else about this because I felt that I made a dumb mistake.

My niece called the Delaware State Police Troop 3 and spoke to Trooper Daddio who then transferred her call to Detective Durham. He didn't seem at all interested and told her to call back in the second week of January. She then called 911 and t hey again placed her call to Troop 3 and they again put her through to Detective Durham's desk. She told her story to the Trooper there. He said she would need to speak to Detective Durham. She told him that he did earlier and he had said not to call him till the second week of January. So he gave her the name Lester Johnson and his phone number. Mr. Johnson works for the Attorney General's office, a unit

which specializes in crimes against the elderly. She then called Lester Johnson and gave him my story and he said to call 911 and get an Officer out there to do a report. She did that and they told her I had to call myself. When I called they said they did not have any way of knowing that I was overcharged and that they couldn't do that. I told my niece what they said so she called Lester Johnson again. Mr. Johnson seemed irritated with the police and said he would take care of it himself. I wasn't long in getting a call from Troop 3. An Officer was on his way out to take a report.

Mr. Johnson, the Trooper and my niece all wanted to be here when Robert Branton would come again. I called Robert Branton and he said he would come back out once the weather was nicer.

I called him a second time and left a message asking him to give me a day and time to be here. I told him I needed to know so I could be here.

I came home almost noon on January 29 when my daughter-in-law called me and told me I had just missed the man who had fixed my gutter. I called him on his cell phone right away and he said he would be here in about 5 minutes. I then called my niece and told her and I called Lester Johnson and left a message for him. I called the Trooper and they said they would get someone right out. Mr. Johnson called me back and said he was on his way and for me to try to keep them here long enough for everyone to get here. All three of the men were here again. My son who lives next door came over. We took them down to the basement to show them more work down there just to kill some time. Robert Branton wanted to get to work on my basement right away. Of course I wouldn't let him. My niece came by and started taking pictures of their truck and wrote their tag number and stuff down trying not to be seen. Then the Trooper came. And soon after that Mr. Johnson and his assistant who is a senior volunteer were there. Another Trooper came out also. All three men were checked out and Robert Branton was arrested. The other two men were free to go. Robert Branton pulled out a big roll of cash from his pocket and gave some of it to the police officer, who counted it and gave it to Mr. Johnson who also counted it and then passed it to me and told me to count it. It was every dollar back that I had paid to Robert Branton. Robert Branton was handcuffed and placed in the back seat of the Troopers car and taken in.

I want to thank the Officers and especially Mr. Johnson for all their help. If it wasn't for Mr. Johnson, this Robert Branton would still be out there taking advantage of the elderly people. Thank you.